

Message Text

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70

ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 IO-14 ISO-00 SCCT-02 SAJ-01 SAM-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07

PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 AF-10 NIC-01

DRC-01 /147 W

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R 291615Z JUL 74

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9335

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

USMISSION GENEVA

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

UQMRA/AMEMBASSY JIDDA 6709

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

USINT ABAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 8863

LONDON FOR LAMBRAKIS

GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PINS XF UR

SUBJECT: 'ARAFAT VISIT TO MOSCOW

REF: (A) BEIRUT 8200; (B) MOSCOW 1158 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: PLO DEL HEADED BY 'ARAFAT REPORTEDLY WILL LEAVE

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FOR MOSCOW IN NEXT DAY OR TWO, AND LOCAL MEDIA--DOUBTLESS

INFLUENCED BY FEDAYEEN EXCITEMENT--ARE ALREADY BILLING IT AS EVENT OF "TREMENDOUS" SIGNIFICANCE. ALTHOUGH IMPENDING NEXT STAGE OF GENEVA CONFERENCE AND CONFUSED STATE OF CURRENT ARAB-FEDAYEEN RELATIONS PROBABLY LEND GREATER IMPORTANCE TO THIS LATEST VISIT (IN COMPARISON TO THOSE OF PAST, WE PREFER RESERVE JUDGMENT ON WHAT TO EXPECT IN WAY OF "NEW ERA" IN SOV-FEDAYEEN RELATIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. ACCORDING TO REPORTS APPEARING HERE JULY 29 IN SEVERAL NEWSPAPERS WITH GOOD FEDAYEEN CONTACTS, PLO DEL HEADED BY YASIR 'ARAFAT WILL DEPART BEIRUT JULY 30 OR 31 FOR FIVE DAYS OF "OFFICIAL" TALKS IN MOSCOW WITH SOV OFFICIALS, INCLUDING FONMIN GROMYKO AND PROBABLY CHAIRMAN BREZHNEV (FROM WHOM INVITATION TO 'ARAFAT IS SAID TO HAVE COME). IN ADDITION TO 'ARAFAT, PLO DEL REPORTEDLY WILL INCLUDE FAROUQ QADDOUMI (ABU LUTF), FATAH LUMINARY AND PLO EX COMM MEMBER RESPONSIBLE FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS; ZOHAYR MUHSEN, SA'IQA LEADER AND PLO EX COMM MEMBER RESPONSIBLE FOR MILITARY AFFAIRS; YASIR ABD RABBO, PLO EX COMM MEMBER RESPONSIBLE FOR INFORMATION MATTERS; KHALID AL FAHOUM, PRES. OF PALESTINE NATIONAL COUNCIL AND 'ARAFAT LOYALIST; TAYSIR QUBA'A, FORMER PFLP REP ON PLO EX COMM; AHMED AL AZHARI, LONG-TERM FATAH POLITICAL ADVISER TO 'ARAFAT; AND ABDUL MUHSEN ABU MAYZAR, PLO OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN AND NEW EX COMM MEMBER WHO WAS DEPORTED LATE IN 1973 FROM WEST BANK FOR ACTIVITIES CONNECTED WITH SO-CALLED "PALESTINE NATIONAL FRONT" (A PRO-'ARAFAT "MODERATE" GROUP REPORTED TO HAVE STRONG COMMUNIST BACKING). ACCORDING TO THESE REPORTS, PLO DEL WILL TOUR POLAND, BULGARIA, CZECHOSLOVAKIA, EAST GERMANY AND YUGOSLAVIA AFTER VISITING USSR.

2. LOCAL PRESS, PARTICULARLY PRO-FEDAYEEN AL MUHARRIR, IS BILLING 'ARAFAT'S VISIT AS "MOST IMPORTANT" EVENT AND STRESSING (IN COMPLETE CONTRAST WITH REMARKS BY SOVIET MFA'S PYRLIN REPORTED PARA 4 REFTEL B) THAT HE WILL AT LAST BE RECEIVED "OFFICIALLY" BY SOVS AND IN EFFECT TREATED AS HEAD OF STATE. (COMMENT: WE GATHER THIS IMPRESSION FOUNDED LARGELY ON FACT THAT 'ARAFAT HAS MET SEVERAL TIMES WITH SOV AMB AZIMOV HERE OVER PAST FEW DAYS, CONFIDENTIAL

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ALLEGEDLY, TO "TIDY UP" ARRANGEMENTS FOR HIS TRIP. SOV EMBOFF HERE, WHEN QUERIED CASUALLY JULY 29 RE TREATMENT TO BE ACCORDED PLO DEL IN MOSCOW, TOLD US CAGILY THAT IT "QUITE POSSIBLE" 'ARAFAT WOULD BE GIVEN "OFFICIAL" STATUS.)

3. SAME PAPERS ALSO CLAIM FONMIN GROMYKO WILL LEAD SOV OFFICIALS IN SIX "WORKING CONFERENCES" WITH 'ARAFAT AND CO. IN MOSCOW. AGENDA OF ITEMS ALLEGEDLY TO BE RAISED

BY FEDAYEEN SEEMS QUITE ELABORATE, INCLUDING INTER ALIA REQUESTS FOR SOVIET VIEWS RE JULY 17 JORDANIAN-EGYPTIAN COMMUNIQUE, PLO 10-POINT PROGRAM ADOPTED AT RECENT PNC IN CAIRO, PROSPECTS FOR JORDAN-ISRAEL DISENGAGEMENT, NEXT STAGE OF GENEVA PEACE TALKS, PALESTINIAN "NATIONAL RIGHTS", AND HOARY SUBJECT OF PALESTINIAN GOVT-IN-EXILE. 'ARAFAT REPORTEDLY WILL ALSO SEEK SOV AGREEMENT TO SOME FORM OF "COORDINATION PLAN" FOR FUTURE FEDAYEEN-SOVIET RELATIONS, AS WELL AS SOV RECOGNITION OF PLO AS SOLE REPRESENTATIVE OF PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND PERMISSION TO OPEN PLO OFFICE IN MOSCOW.

4. COMMENT: IN CONTEXT OF PREPARATION FOR NEXT STAGE OF NEGOTIATIONS AT GENEVA AND OF ONGOING INTER-ARAB, ESPECIALLY FEDAYEEN-EGYPTIAN, CONTROVERSY CAUSED BY JULY 17 SADAT-HUSSEIN COMMUNIQUE, WE THINK IT LIKELY THAT THIS LATEST VISIT BY 'ARAFAT AND PLO DEL TO MOSCOW WILL ASSUME GREATER SIGNIFICANCE THAN THOSE MADE BY FEDAYEEN DELS TO USSR IN PAST. WE RECALL, HOWEVER, THAT ROSY FEDAYEEN EXPECTATIONS OF "OFFICIAL" SOV RECOGNITION AND SUPPORT PROVED GRIEVOUSLY UNFOUNDED AT TIME OF 'ARAFAT'S LAST VISIT TO MOSCOW IN MID-1973, AND WE PREFER TO WAIT AND SEE WHAT HAPPENS THIS TIME INSTEAD OF MAKING ANY CALCULATED PREDICTIONS.
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